



**FOR THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY OF RIVERS ALLIANCE OF CONNECTICUT**

February 3 2017

Rivers Alliance of Connecticut is a statewide, non-profit coalition of river organizations, individuals, and businesses formed to protect Connecticut's waters by promoting sound water policies, uniting and strengthening the state's many river groups, and educating the public about the importance of water stewardship.

To: Sen. Ted Kennedy Jr., Sen. Craig Miner, Rep. Mike Demicco, Chairmen;
And Honorable Members of the Environment Committee:

SB 754- An Act Prohibiting the Use of Herbicides on State Highways by the Department of Transportation (SUPPORT). As the Committee knows, Rivers Alliance has long sought to limit the use of pesticides/herbicides. According to the U. S. Geological Survey, these toxic substances are found in all U.S. streams, often at levels dangerous to wildlife and humans. What is sprayed or otherwise applied on land eventually enters water, and highway spray areas are frequently adjacent to steep slopes, wetlands, and streams. Lou Burch in testimony for Citizens Campaign for the Environment (CCE) has marshalled the facts in support of this bill, and we refer you to his testimony.

HB 5884- An Act Prohibiting the Use of Coal Tar Sealants on State & Local Highways (SUPPORT). Again, we support the evidence and testimony offered by Lou Burch, adding that PAHs, used in coal tar sealants, are especially toxic (lethal) to aquatic life.

HB 5873 AA Requiring Notice Prior to Pesticide Applications by Railroad Companies and Requiring Vegetation Management Plans by Such Companies. (SUPPORT). Many towns and town people understandably react negatively when they become aware of heavy pesticide use by a utility, with no notice having been given. This bill proposes a courtesy to the public, and would reduce risks to human health and to wildlife.

HB 5503 AAC Lake Authorities and Combatting Invasive Plant and Animal Species. (OPPOSE AS WRITTEN). Many of the state's lakes and ponds are in poor to very bad condition. Restoring them to sustainable good health is an extremely important but difficult goal to achieve, becoming more difficult every day as the climate changes. Lake communities, lake authorities, and people who use lakes often have markedly different ideas about the best way to improve conditions. This enormous problem does need much better science and more funding. But taking money away from the Community Investment Act will only weaken what is arguably our most effective conservation revenue program, without, at this time, any guarantee that the results will reflect the best science, policy, and management attainable for lake restoration and protection.

Thank you for your attention. We would be happy to answer questions.

Margaret Miner, Executive Director

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Margaret Miner", is written over the printed name and contact information.